

WE CLAIM AS OUR INVENTION:

1. A method for input of service data into a service device, said service data being available at a data center located remotely from said service device, comprising the steps of:

providing a memory for service data in a service device and forming in said service device, a status report of memory occupancy by said service data in said memory;

establishing a communication between said service device and said data center and transmitting said status report from said service device to said data center;

based on said status report and the service data available at said data center, forming recommendations in said data center for a future status of said memory occupancy in said service device;

communicating a message from said data center to said service device containing said recommendations;

upon receipt of said message at said service device, checking said recommendations in said service device for feasibility; and

loading said service data available at said data center into said memory of said service device according to one of said recommendations.

2. A method as claimed in claim 1,

wherein the step of providing a memory comprises providing said memory with at least one first memory area in which new service data which will be

valid in the future, starting from a conversion date, are to be stored, and a second memory area in which currently valid service data are stored, and wherein the step of establishing a communication comprises checking, in said service device, as to whether a load instruction has been entered into said service device and, if so, establishing said communication with said data center;

wherein the step of forming recommendations comprises recommending storage of said service data in at least one of said first memory areas, and wherein the step of checking said recommendations comprises conducting a check, in said service device, as to the feasibility of storing said service data in at least one of said first memory areas;

and wherein said method further comprises forming request data in said service device, requesting said service data, if said check indicates feasibility of storing said service data in at least one of said first memory areas and transmitting said request data to said data center, and forming an error message if said check indicates non-feasibility of storing said service data in any of said first memory areas and transmitting said error message to said data center;

and wherein the step of loading said service data comprises, upon receipt of said request data at said data center, transmitting said service data from said data center to said service device and loading said service data, as said new service data, into said one of said first memory areas together with said conversion date; and

automatically updating said service device independently of and separated in time from loading said new service data, by transferring said new service data from said one of said first memory areas into said second memory area at said conversion date.

3. A method as claimed in claim 2 wherein said service data available at said data center comprise a plurality of data tables, each data table having a table type and a table description associated therewith, and wherein the step of forming said request data comprises forming request data including one of said table types and one of said table descriptions, and wherein the step of forming said recommendations at said data center comprises forming said recommendations in a sequence dependent on the table type and table description contained in said request data and wherein the step of conducting a check comprises checking said recommendations for feasibility in an order determined by said sequence and wherein the step of selecting one of said first memory areas comprises selecting one of said first memory areas recommended in a first of said recommendations in said sequence which is found to be feasible, and wherein the step of loading said service data comprises selectively loading, at a first point in time, at least the data table, and its associated conversion date, corresponding to the recommendation first found to be feasible in said check, and wherein the step of automatically updating said service device comprises periodically determining whether a current date precedes, equals or follows said conversion date and automatically updating said service device if said current date equals or follows said conversion date

and continuing operation of said service device with the service data currently stored in said second memory area if said current date precedes said conversion date.

4. A method as claimed in claim 3 wherein the step of providing a memory comprises providing a memory in said service device with a third memory area and wherein the step of loading said service data comprises loading said conversion date into said third memory area and wherein the step of automatically updating said service device comprises providing an electronic calendar module in said service device which continuously emits a signal identifying said current date, and periodically comparing said conversion date in said third memory area with said signal from said calendar module.

5. A method as claimed in claim 3 comprising the additional step of providing a calendar module in said service device which emits a signal identifying said current date, and wherein the step of automatic updating comprises automatically requesting said current date from said calendar module.

6. A method as claimed in claim 3 comprising loading said conversion date into a separate memory area of said memory of said service device, separate from said first memory area.

7. A method as claimed in claim 3 wherein said service data comprise postage fee schedule table data, and comprising the additional steps of:

providing a postage calculator in said service device which calculates a franking value using said postage fee schedule table data;

providing a further memory area in said memory of said service device;

communicating from said data center to said service device information about new postage fee schedule table data available at said data center and making an entry in said further memory area dependent on said information;

generating a load code in said postage calculator and checking if and when said load code has a predetermined relationship to said entry in said further memory area;

switching to a load mode and loading said new postage fee schedule table data into said one of said first memory areas if and when said predetermined relationship exists.

8. A method as claimed in claim 7 wherein the step of communicating information comprises communicating information from said data center about said new postage fee schedule table data comprising a plurality of proposals in a list.

9. A method as claimed in claim 8 comprising listing a most meaningful proposal first in said list.

10. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the step of loading said service data includes compressing said service data.

11. An arrangement for input of service data into a service device, said service data being available at a data center located remotely from said service device, comprising the steps of:

a services device having a memory for service data, a computer which forms a status report of memory occupancy by said service data in said memory;
means for establishing a communication between said service device and said data center and for transmitting said status report from said service device to said data center;
means for forming recommendations in said data center, based on said status report and the service data available at said data center, for a future status of said memory occupancy in said service device;
means for communicating a message from said data center to said service device containing said recommendations;
upon receipt of said message at said service device, said computer checking said recommendations in said service device for feasibility;
said computer loading said service data available at said data center into said memory of said service device according to one of said recommendations; and
means in said service device for triggering updating of said service data in said memory at a time separated from loading of said service data into said memory.

12. An arrangement as claimed in claim 11,

wherein said memory comprises at least one first memory area in which new service data which will be valid in the future, starting from a conversion date, are to be stored, and a second memory area in which currently valid service data are stored, and wherein said means for establishing a communication comprises means for checking, in said service device, as to whether a load instruction has been entered into said service device and, if so, for establishing said communication with said data center;

wherein said means for forming recommendations comprises means for recommending storage of said service data in at least one of said first memory areas;

wherein said computer checks said recommendations by conducting a check, in said service device, as to the feasibility of storing said service data in at least one of said first memory areas;

said computer forming request data in said service device, requesting said service data, if said check indicates feasibility of storing said service data in at least one of said first memory areas and transmitting said request data to said data center, and forming an error message if said check indicates non-feasibility of storing said service data in any of said first memory areas and transmitting said error message to said data center;

said computer, upon receipt of said request data at said data center, transmitting said service data from said data center to said service device and loading said service data, as said new service data, into said one of said first memory areas together with said conversion date; and

said computer automatically updating said service device independently of and separated in time from loading said new service data, by transferring said new service data from said one of said first memory areas into said second memory area at said conversion date.

13. An arrangement as claimed in claim 12 wherein said service data available at said data center comprise a plurality of data tables, each data table having a table type and a table description associated therewith, and wherein said computer forms said request data comprises forming request data including one of said table types and one of said table descriptions, and wherein said means for forming said recommendations at said data center forms said recommendations in a sequence dependent on the table type and table description contained in said request data, and wherein said computer conducts said check by checking said recommendations for feasibility in an order determined by said sequence and selects one of said first memory areas which is in recommended in a first of said recommendations in said sequence which is found to be feasible, and selectively loads, at a first point in time, at least the data table, and its associated conversion date, corresponding to the recommendation first found to be feasible in said check, and automatically updates said service device if a current date precedes, equals or follows said conversion date and automatically continues operation of said service device with the service data currently stored in said second memory area if said current date precedes said conversion date.

14. An arrangement as claimed in claim 13 wherein said memory has a third memory area and wherein said computer loads said conversion date into said third memory area, and said service device comprises an electronic calendar module which continuously emits a signal identifying said current date, said computer periodically comparing said conversion date in said third memory area with said signal from said calendar module.

15. An arrangement as claimed in claim 13 wherein said service device comprises a calendar module which emits a signal identifying said current date, and wherein said computer automatically requests said current date from said calendar module.

16. An arrangement as claimed in claim 13 wherein said computer loads said conversion date into a separate memory area of said memory of said service device, separate from said first memory area.

17. An arrangement as claimed in claim 13 wherein said service data comprise postage fee schedule table data, and said arrangement comprising:

a postage calculator in said service device which calculates a franking value

using said postage fee schedule table data;

a further memory area in said memory of said device;

means for communicating from said data center to said service device

information about new postage fee schedule table data available at said

data center and for making an entry in said further memory area dependent on said information;

said postage calculator generating a load code and checking, and informing said computer, if and when said load code has a predetermined relationship to said entry in said further memory area; and

said computer switching to a load mode and loading said new postage fee schedule table data into said one of said first memory areas if and when said predetermined relationship exists.

18. An arrangement as claimed in claim 17 wherein said means for information communicates information from said data center about said new postage fee schedule table data comprising a plurality of proposals in a list.

19. An arrangement as claimed in claim 18 wherein said means for communicating information lists a most meaningful proposal first in said list.

20. An arrangement as claimed in claim 11 comprising means compressing said service data.